

only that high because we have increased some private investment, some local government funding and, of course, the reviled stimulus funding that helped reduce some of the more egregious shortfalls while putting people to work.

It is ironic that some of the rationale for some of this bizarre budget behavior, which, thankfully, will never be enacted into law, is the need to save taxpayer money and reduce deficits.

In reality, if this budget were approved, it would actually end up costing American taxpayers more. Families will earn even less if we continue this funding level for infrastructure that is inadequate. There will be hundreds of millions of hours of time lost as people are stuck in traffic, and the number of miles of congestion increased over 30 percent. Of course, our businesses will pay almost a half trillion dollars more in transportation costs and repair while business will be underperforming, and that will cost money too.

The path forward is clear. We should provide increased funding for transportation and infrastructure. The gas tax has not been increased in 20 years, which, incidentally, was the last time we had balanced budgets. This is the quickest way to get the new revenues that many feel are necessary to be part of any rational, long-term grand budget agreement and tax reform.

It would be supported by a wide array of business, labor, environmental groups, and local government. Indeed, there is a vast coalition that is saying, tax me so I can do my job better and we can revitalize America's communities and our sagging economy.

It is no longer acceptable for us to talk past one another. By dealing boldly with the infrastructure crisis in the context of realistic budgets and meaningful tax reform, we can put Americans back to work. We can break the logjam here on Capitol Hill. We can strengthen the economy while we make our communities more livable and our families safer, healthier, and more economically secure.

TENTH UNANSWERED BENGHAZI QUESTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, over the last 2 weeks, I raised a series of questions focusing on the attack on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, as well as Washington's response, or lack thereof.

To date, little is known why Ambassador Stevens was in the U.S. consulate in the days leading up to the anniversary of 9/11. Even less known is about the other American facility in Benghazi: the CIA annex. When was the annex established? How many people worked at the annex? Of these, how many were direct agency employees and how many were contractors? What was the ratio of CIA staff to security

contractors? Why was there a facility operated by the CIA in Benghazi? Perhaps it was established to assist in U.S. efforts to secure weapons in the wake of the Libyan revolution.

As early as 2011, National Journal reported:

The U.S. is also planning to ramp up spending to help Libya's interim government secure and destroy the shoulder-fired surface-to-air missiles and weapons looted from Qadhafi's stockpiles. A senior State Department official said Clinton will tell Libyan leaders that the U.S. contribution to these efforts will go up to \$40 million.

The same article noted:

The U.S. has already spent nearly \$6 million on its conventional weapons disposal efforts, sending a quick reaction force of weapons experts to Libya by October 2011.

If, indeed, the facility in Benghazi was involved in the collection of these weapons, where are they? The \$40 million promised by Secretary Clinton would buy a very large quantity of weapons. Were they shipped out of Benghazi? Are they in warehouses on U.S. soil? Are they in other allied countries? Or did they end up elsewhere?

There has been speculation that some of these weapons may have ended up in Syria.

It is particularly noteworthy that during the same time period that the U.S. engaged in collecting weapons in Libya, respected national security reporter Mark Hosenball wrote on August 1, 2012:

President Barack Obama has signed a secret order authorizing U.S. support for rebels seeking to depose Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and his government, U.S. sources familiar with the matter said. Obama's order, approved earlier this year and known as an intelligence "finding," broadly permits the CIA and other U.S. agencies to provide support that could help the rebels oust Assad.

The article continued:

The White House is for now apparently stopping short of giving the rebels lethal weapons, even as some U.S. allies do just that, and precisely when Obama signed the secret intelligence authorization, an action not previously reported, could not be determined.

However, Hosenball also reported this important information:

A U.S. Government source acknowledged that under provisions of the Presidential finding, the United States was collaborating with a secret command center operated by Turkey and its allies, and NBC said the shoulder-fired missiles, also known as MANPADS, had been delivered to the rebels via Turkey.

Is it possible that the President's intelligence finding included an authorization for the weapons collected in Libya to be transferred to Syrian rebels? Was the CIA annex being used to facilitate these transfers? If so, how did the weapons physically move from Libya to Syria? By plane? By ship?

And, again, I ask, if these weapons were not being transferred to other countries like Syria, where exactly did they end up? Was the CIA annex being used as a logistics center to track and

transfer these weapons? Was Ambassador Stevens' visit to the CIA annex on September 10 associated with these operations? And if these activities were taking place, was this consistent with the President's intelligence finding? Was the Congress notified?

Mr. Speaker, I raise these questions knowing that CIA operations anywhere are sensitive and there is an appropriate time and place for the discussions. However, I don't think the American people will ever learn the truth about what happened that night and why—including the questionable U.S. response—unless they understand what exactly was taking place at the annex.

That is why I continue to believe that a House select committee is the most appropriate path forward to investigate this and many other unanswered questions about Benghazi.

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IN HONOR OF JAMES WATTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise, along with my colleague Representative STEVEN PALAZZO, to honor James Watts for his many years of service to community and country.

Born in 1919 in McComb, Mississippi, Mr. Watts has dedicated his career to public service. His children and stepchildren have followed in their parents' footsteps and have been leaders in their own right throughout the United States.

During World War II, Mr. Watts defended his country by tracking German submarines as a member of the United States Coast Guard. Later, in civilian life, he would go on to hold executive board positions in both the Boy Scouts of America and the Girl Scouts of America organizations.

Mr. Watts' passion for volunteerism speaks volumes about his character. While he lived in Grand Junction, Colorado, he volunteered as an EMT and then as a paramedic for what is now St. Mary's Hospital and Regional Medical Center in Grand Junction, Colorado. Upon relocation to Gulfport, Mississippi, Mr. Watts taught CPR and first aid for the American Red Cross and various organizations around the country—a testament to his devotion to the well-being of the communities he has lived in and visited.

Perhaps one of his biggest accomplishments was in 1956 while he worked for the Atomic Energy Commission. As a mine safety engineer in New Mexico, Mr. Watts noticed a uranium boomtown of more than 10,000 residents who were living without access to a local hospital for emergency services. With ambition and selflessness, he took it upon himself to spearhead organizational efforts for the creation of the Cibola General Hospital, which has been committed to serving the medical